CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method for uniquely marking a media file,

comprising:

5   receiving a media file; and

         appending an identifier onto the media file.

2.   The method of claim 1, further comprising retrieving

the identifier from a non-volatile memory.

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3.   The method of claim 1, wherein the identifier

identifies a player unit.

4.   The method of claim 1, further comprising storing

15 the appended media file in a data storage medium.

5.   The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving

a message file.

20   6.   The method of claim 5, wherein the media file and

the message file arrive in a concatenated state.

7.   The method of claim 5, wherein the step of receiving a message file comprises receiving a message file selected from the group consisting of commercial messages or informational messages.

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8.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving a media file comprises receiving an audio file.

9.   The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving
10   a media file comprises receiving a video file.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving a media file comprises receiving a text file.

15   11. A method for delivering a message file, comprising:

receiving a media file with a first identifier;

comparing the first identifier with a second identifier;

retrieving a message file and producing a message output from the message file if the first identifier does not
20   correspond to the second identifier; and

producing a media output from the media file.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising retrieving a second identifier from a non-volatile memory.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of
5 retrieving a message file comprises retrieving a message file from a storage device.

14. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of retrieving a message file comprises retrieving a message file
10 from a non-volatile memory.

15. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of retrieving a message file comprises retrieving a message file selected from the group consisting of commercial messages or
15 informational messages.

16. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of receiving a media file comprises receiving an audio file.

20   17. The method of claim 11, wherein the step of receiving a media file comprises receiving a video file.

18.   The method of claim 11, wherein the step of

receiving a media file comprises receiving a text file.

19.   The method of claim 11, wherein the second

5   identifier uniquely identifies a player unit.

20.   The method of claim 11, wherein the first identifier

identifies a player unit.

10   21.   The method of claim 11, wherein the media file and

the message file are in a concatenated state.

22.   The method of claim 11, wherein if the message file

cannot be retrieved, then the step of producing a media output

15   is not carried out.

23.   A player unit for delivering media files,

comprising:

a processor;

20   a non-volatile memory communicatively coupled to the

processor;

a first identifier stored in the non-volatile memory,

wherein the first identifier uniquely identifies the player

unit;

a communications port communicatively coupled to the

5   processor and capable of communicatively coupling the player

unit to a computer system;

a data storage drive communicatively coupled to the

processor and capable of transferring data between the player

unit and a removable data storage medium;

10   a first application program residing in the player unit

and accessible by the processor, the application program

comprising one or more sequences of instructions for uniquely

marking a media file, the one or more sequences of

instructions causing the processor to perform a number of

15   acts, said acts comprising:

receiving a media file,

retrieving the first identifier from the non-

volatile memory,

appending the first identifier onto the media file,

20   and

storing the appended media file in the removable

data storage medium; and

a second application program residing in the player unit

and accessible by the processor, the application program

comprising one or more sequences of instructions for

delivering a message file, the one or more sequences of

5   instructions causing the processor to perform a number of

acts, said acts comprising:

          receiving a media file with a second identifier;

          comparing the second identifier to the first

      identifier;

10   retrieving a message file from the non-volatile

      memory and producing a message output from the message

      file if the second identifier does not correspond to the

      identifier; and

          producing a media output from the media file.

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      24.   A player unit for delivering media files,

comprising:

      a first logic circuit configured to perform a number of

acts, said acts comprising:

20   receiving a media file,

          retrieving a first identifier from a non-volatile

      memory,

appending a representation of the first identifier

onto the media file, and

storing the appended media file in a removable data

storage medium;

5   a second logic circuit configured to perform a number of

acts, said acts comprising:

receiving a media file with a second identifier;

comparing the second identifier to the first

identifier;

10   retrieving a message file from the non-volatile

memory and producing a message output from the message

file if the second identifier does not correspond to the

identifier; and

producing a media output from the media file;

15   a non-volatile memory communicatively coupled to the

logic circuits;

a first identifier stored in the non-volatile memory,

wherein the identifier uniquely identifies the player unit;

a communications port communicatively coupled to the

20   logic circuits and capable of communicatively coupling the

player unit to a computer system; and

a data storage drive communicatively coupled to the logic

circuits and capable of transferring data between the player

unit and a removable data storage medium.

5   25. The method of claim 1, wherein the identifier

comprises a derivative of an electronic serial number of a

player unit.

           26. The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving

10 a media identifier that uniquely identifies the media file.

           27. The method of claim 26, wherein the media identifier

is derived from an industry standard number encoded on the

media file.